(iii) Concessional export credit with extended periodical coverage has been effected,

(iv) Refund of Service Tax in various sectors related to exports of goods, has been notified

(c) A Report of the Confederation of Indian Textile Industry (CITI) indicates that stagnation of exports in 2007-08 due to the unprecedented appreciation of the rupee, and the consequent downturn in textiles exports will lead to a loss of around 5.79 lakh potential new jobs. The loss in direct employment in the textiles and clothing industry will be to the tune of 2.72 lakh jobs The report of the CITI has not quantified any job loss that may have already occurred

Handloom weavers working as daily wagers

2631. SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that handloom weavers of Varanasi and adjoining areas as per the latest report are leaving their profession and working as daily wages in different cities;

(b) if so, whether Government has made any estimate of weavers having left their profession and number of those living in distressed conditions,

(c) with the latest announcement of financial support to weavers in the budget, how many of them will be benefited;

(d) whether Government will approach the weavers who have left the profession to start up again and provide them long term interest free loans; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) and (b) No such reports have been received from the State Government As per the information received from the Government of Uttar Pradesh, there are about 2.00 lakh weavers/ workers in Varanasi, out of which about 1.00 lakh weavers are engaged in weaving while remaining are engaged in allied activities.

(c) It is expected to benefit about 1.00 lakh weavers by taking 2 mega handloom clusters

(d) and (e) Do not arise.

MSP for mulberry, multivoltine and bivoltine cocoons

2632. SHRI SYED AZEEZ PASHA : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is considering the request of Government of Andhra Pradesh to introduce Minimum Support Price for the mulberry cocoons and fix Rs 100 - per kg. for multivoltine cocoons and Rs. 1.50 per kg. for bivoltine cocoons;

(b) if so, whether any steps have been taken by Government in this regard,

(c) if so, the details thereof, and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) to (c) The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh *vide* letter dated 13.07.2007 requested the Government of India regarding introduction of Minimum Support Price (MSP) for the mulberry cocoons and to fix Rs. 100/- per kg. for Multivoltine cocoons and Rs. 150/- per kg. for Bivoltine cocoons. Government of India has asked Central Silk Board to obtain the views of other States and suggest a comprehensive and workable scheme alongwtih mechanism for its implementation.

(d) Does not arise.

Handloom Export Zone

2633. SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any proposal to set up nation's first Handloom Export Zone (HEZ);

(b) if so, the details thereof and the location identified for setting up of the same;

(c) whether it is also proposed to extend the same to other parts of the country particularly in Tamil Nadu;

(d) whether there is also proposal to set up export panel for preparing fibre policy; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) and (b) The Handloom Export Promotion Council has started implementing Handloom Export Zone project in Nagercoil, Kancheepuram, Thiruvannamalai, Nagapattinam and Thiruvallur with the financial aid from State agencies. These projects aim to establish Commom Facility Centres, increase productivity and quality of handloom products and loom upgradation. These projects will create a supply hub for home textile for 'export markets with trained' workforce.

(c) The Handloom Export Promotion Council has started implementing all the five Handloom Export Zone projects in the State of Tamil Nadu. Presently, there is no proposal with the Government to extend the same to other parts of the country.

(d) and (e) There is no proposal to set up export panel for preparing fibre policy.

Numbers of handloom, powerloom, synthetic yarn etc. production units

†2634. SHRI JAI PARKASH AGGARWAL: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the present number of handloom , powerloom, synthetic yarn, readymade garments and hosiery producing units in the country as on date, location-wise;

(b) the amount of funds spent by Government for the development of textile industries each year during the last three years, till date; and

(c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by Government to promote the export of textiles produced by the said units?

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi .